

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY
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TAGS: PARM, SOPN

SUBJECT: MAY 5 ROUNDUP: PRESS ITEMS OF ARMS CONTROL
INTEREST

LONDON FOR AMB/EX, SOFIA FOR AMBASSADOR

1. RICHARD BURT OF NEW YORK TIMES REPORTED THAT WHITE
HOUSE SAID THAT "TOUGH BARGAINING" REMAINED BEFORE U.S. AND
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USSR COULD AGREE ON NEW AGREEMENT TO LIMIT OFFENSIVE
STRATEGIC WEAPONS. WHITE HOUSE ALSO SAID THERE WERE NO
PRESENT PLANS FOR MEETING BETWEEN CARTER AND BREZHNEV THIS
SUMMER, BURT ADDED. HE SAID WHITE HOUSE SPOKESMAN JODY
POWELL MADE THESE STATEMENTS AFTER HE WAS ASKED ABOUT NEW
YORK TIMES REPORT THAT U.S. TENTATIVELY HAD DECIDED TO
ACCEPT SOVIET PROPOSAL THAT WOULD LIMIT EACH SIDE TO 2,250

LONG-RANGE MISSILES AND BOMBERS AND THAT THIS DEVELOPMENT HAD CLEARED WAY FOR CARTER-BREZHNEV MEETING THIS SUMMER. BURT REPORTED THAT ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS SAID THURSDAY, AS THEY DID WEDNESDAY, THAT U.S. WAS MOVING TOWARD ACCEPTANCE OF SOVIET COMPROMISE PROPOSAL. "THEY SAID THAT AMERICAN NEGOTIATORS HAD RECENTLY BEEN INSTRUCTED TO CONVEY THIS MESSAGE TO SOVIET UNION AT TALKS IN GENEVA," BURT CONTINUED. "THEY ALSO POINTED OUT THAT TWO SIDES HAD YET TO AGREE FORMALLY TO ARRANGEMENT WHICH WOULD ALSO ALLOW EACH SIDE TO PLACE MULTIPLE WARHEADS ON MAXIMUM OF 1,200 OF MISSILES." BURT REPORTED THAT ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS SAID POWELL'S REMARKS WERE AN ACCURATE ASSESSMENT OF STATUS OF TALKS AND THAT TWO MAJOR ISSUES, AS WELL AS SEVERAL SMALLER QUESTIONS, STILL STOOD IN WAY OF AN AGREEMENT. BUT, HE ADDED, OFFICIALS SUGGESTED THAT POWELL MIGHT HAVE GIVEN AN OVERLY PESSIMISTIC PICTURE OF PROSPECTS FOR SUMMIT MEETING TO AVOID GIVING IMPRESSION THAT ADMINISTRATION WAS RUSHING INTO NEW AGREEMENT.

2. MURREY MARDER OF WASHINGTON POST SAID ADMINISTRATION SOURCES CONFIRMED THAT AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED ON TWO ISSUES CITED IN TIMES ARTICLE. MARDER CALLED THEM "IMPORTANT--BUT LIMITED--STEPS FORWARD IN SALT." HE EXPLAINED THAT "IN TERMS OF TOTALITY OF NEGOTIATIONS, THIS TRADE-OFF BETWEEN AMERICAN AND SOVIET DEMANDS RESOLVES SEVERAL OF LEAST CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES BLOCKING

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CONCLUSION OF NEW PACT TO LIMIT OFFENSIVE STRATEGIC WEAPONS UNTIL 1985. MORE DIFFICULT OBSTACLES MUST BE OVERCOME BEFORE THERE CAN BE SUMMIT MEETING BETWEEN PRESIDENT CARTER AND SOVIET PRESIDENT LEONID I. BREZHNEV TO PUT FINAL SEAL ON SALT TWO AGREEMENT." MARDER SAID NUMEROUS ADMINISTRATION SOURCES COMPLAINED IN PRIVATE THAT FORM OF DISCLOSURE IN NEW YORK TIMES IMPLIED THAT U.S. HAD MADE MOST OF CONCESSIONS TO PRODUCE ADVANCE, WHICH THEY STRONGLY DISPUTED. ONE ADMINISTRATION SOURCE SAID, MARDER REPORTED, "THEIR PROGRAM IS PINCHED MORE THAN OURS--AND PINCHED IN SIGNIFICANT WAYS." MARDER SAID THAT CLAIM, IN TURN, WAS QUESTIONED BY AT LEAST ONE LEADING CRITIC OF ADMINISTRATION NEGOTIATING STRATEGY, PAUL NITZE. "NITZE CONTENDED, AND NUMEROUS ADMINISTRATION SPECIALISTS STRONGLY DISAGREED, THAT 'DEAL IS LOOKING LESS AND LESS GOOD' FOR U.S. ON CONTRARY, OTHERS CONTENDED, U.S. IS EDGING TOWARD ITS GOALS." MARDER SAID ADMINISTRATION CIVILIAN ADVOCATES OF NUCLEAR ARMS CONTROL INDICATED THAT THEY WERE QUITE PLEASED WITH LATEST STEPS FORWARD, WHICH RESULT FROM VANCE'S RECENT TALKS IN MOSCOW. MILITARY SPECIALISTS IN PENTAGON ARE LESS PLEASED; THEY SOUGHT LARGER CUTBACK IN SOVIET NUCLEAR

WEAPONRY, MARDER SAID. "BOTH FACTIONS AGREE, HOWEVER, THAT THORNIEST ISSUES ARE STILL AHEAD. THEY INCLUDE LIMITATIONS ON DEPLOYING NEW MISSILE SYSTEMS, WITH SOVIET UNION PRESSING HARD FOR AN EXEMPTION TO ALLOW IT MAJOR NEW TYPE OF MISSILE; BASIC DISAGREEMENT ON LIMITING SOVIET BOMBER KNOWN AS BACKFIRE; DISAGREEMENT ON MEASURING CRUISE MISSILE RANGE, AND ON DURATION OF SOME OF LIMITATIONS IN TREATY PROTOCOL."

3. BREZHNEV, VISITING WEST GERMANY, CALLED FOR NEW GLOBAL ARMS AGREEMENT WITHOUT YIELDING ANY DETAILS OF WHAT HE HAD IN MIND, REPORTED MICHAEL GETLER OF WASHINGTON POST. HE SAID BREZHNEV, IN ADDITION TO CALLING FOR AGREEMENT TO STOP PRODUCTION AND DEPLOYMENT OF NEW
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WEAPONS SYSTEMS, ALSO URGED MUTUAL AGREEMENT TO "CLOSE OUT BIRTH OF NEUTRON BOMB." BREZHNEV SAID U.S. WANTED TO TRANSFER NEUTRON BOMB "TO PEOPLES OF THIS CONTINENT LIKE AN OMINOUS GIFT."

4. BALTIMORE SUN REPORTED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER TOLD REGIONALLY TELEVISED NEWS CONFERENCE IN PORTLAND, OREGON, THAT BREZHNEV "IS LIKELY TO COME OVER HERE" FOR SUMMIT CONFERENCE WHEN NEW SALT TREATY IS "IMMINENT." BUT PRESIDENT ADDED THAT "WE HAVE NOT DISCUSSED ANY TIME" FOR SUCH MEETING.

5. WESLEY PIPPERT OF UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL SAID CARTER TOLD PORTLAND PRESS CONFERENCE THERE HAS BEEN LOT OF PROGRESS IN SALT NEGOTIATIONS, BUT SEVERAL ISSUES HAVE NOT BEEN RESOLVED. CARTER SAID WE WOULD "INSIST UPON MAINTENANCE OF EQUIVALENT CAPABILITY, DESTRUCTIVE POWER, BETWEEN NUCLEAR ARMAMENTS OF OUR COUNTRY AND SOVIET UNION. OUR DETERMINATION IS THAT ANY SALT AGREEMENT WOULD PROTECT ABILITY OF U.S. TO DEFEND ITSELF AGAINST ANY CONCEIVABLE ATTACK. AND ON TOP OF THAT, ANY SALT AGREEMENT WOULD HAVE TO PROVIDE FOR ADEQUATE PROOF, VERIFIABILITY THAT OTHER NATION WAS CARRYING OUT TERMS OF AGREEMENT." DESPITE REPORTS TO CONTRARY, CARTER SAID NO ACCORD HAS BEEN REACHED WITH SOVIETS ON NUMBER OF LAND-BASED MISSILES, LONG-RANGE BOMBERS AND MULTIPLE WARHEADS EACH SIDE WOULD BE PERMITTED IN FINAL AGREEMENT.

6. WASHINGTON POST PUBLISHED REUTER DISPATCH FROM CHICAGO REPORTING THAT FORMER PRESIDENT FORD EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR ADMINISTRATION'S PROPOSED SALE OF SOPHISTICATED WARPLANES TO ISRAEL, EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA. "BASICALLY CONCEPT IS SOUND," FORD SAID. "EACH OF THREE SALES COULD BE JUSTI-
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FIED ON ITS INDIVIDUAL MERIT."

7. UPI REPORTED THAT U.S., SOVIET, AND BRITISH EXPERTS RESUMED NEGOTIATIONS IN GENEVA THURSDAY ON TOTAL NUCLEAR TEST BAN, "HOPING TO GET SOME KIND OF AGREEMENT TO PRESENT SPECIAL DISARMAMENT SESSION OF U.N. GENERAL ASSEMBLY OPENING LATER THIS MONTH. WESTERN DIPLOMATIC SOURCES SAID THERE APPEARED TO BE POSSIBILITY OF SETTING MORATORIUM ON ALL TESTING PENDING FORMAL TREATY WHICH WOULD INCLUDE CHINA AND FRANCE." UPI SAID SSOD IS "CERTAIN TO WITNESS HEIGHTENED ANGER BY THIRD WORLD AT SLOW PROGRESS BY NUCLEAR POWERS ON ARMS CONTROL." CHRISTOPHER

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